

# Firefighting Foam, F3 Classification List, Replacements for AFFF containing PFAS

*Foam Exposure Committee releases New F3 Classification List for US Fire Departments*

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[Firefighters](#) have been exposed to [PFAS](#) chemicals in firefighting foams. Firefighters continue to not be informed. The US government has acknowledged firefighters are expected to have occupational exposure to PFAS.<sup>1</sup> Firefighters have been put into the position of contaminating their own communities without knowing they were doing so.

The US military is now dealing with massive water contamination issues due to using firefighting foams known as Aqueous Film Forming Foams (AFFF). The US Department of Defense (DoD) is looking for a 'drop-in' replacement product for AFFF.<sup>2</sup> This does not appear likely. Two separate Military Specification (MilSpec) standards for AFFF and [F3](#) formulations may be considered.<sup>3</sup>

Instead of depending upon industry provided information, the Foam Exposure Committee (FEC) has worked to confirm fluorine-free firefighting foam products. FEC developed a standard for firefighting foam sample collection. Sample testing was done by Dr. Graham Peaslee who has pioneered the development of the PIGE method to screen for PFAS in environmental samples.

The foam sample collection efforts by FEC members provided a diverse grouping of samples directly from fire departments including airport fire departments which are required to use AFFF by the Federal Aviation Association (FAA). Test samples were obtained from 30 testers in 16 states.

The committee's efforts are intended to provide fire departments the information they need to choose fluorine-free firefighting foam products now. The F3 Classification List, is the result of this work. These firefighting foams can be considered replacements for AFFF foams containing PFAS. This testing project was privately funded with no government monies involved.

<sup>1</sup>ATSDR, Toxicological Profile for Perfluoroalkyls, Draft for Public Comment, June 2018, <https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/ToxProfiles/tp200.pdf>, p. 551

<sup>2</sup>Things to Know About DOD's Research on 'Fluorine-Free' Firefighting Foam, Miranda Paley, Sept. 6, 2019, <https://www.defense.gov/Explore/News/Article/Article/1953510/5-things-to-know-about-dods-research-on-fluorine-free-firefighting-foam/>

3Buel for Firefighting Foam Evaluations: Gasoline vs Heptane, Naval Research Laboratory, NRL/MR/6123-19-9895, Snow, et al. June 15, 2019,  
<https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/1076690.pdf>

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